

Cohasset Water Problems Begin To Ease

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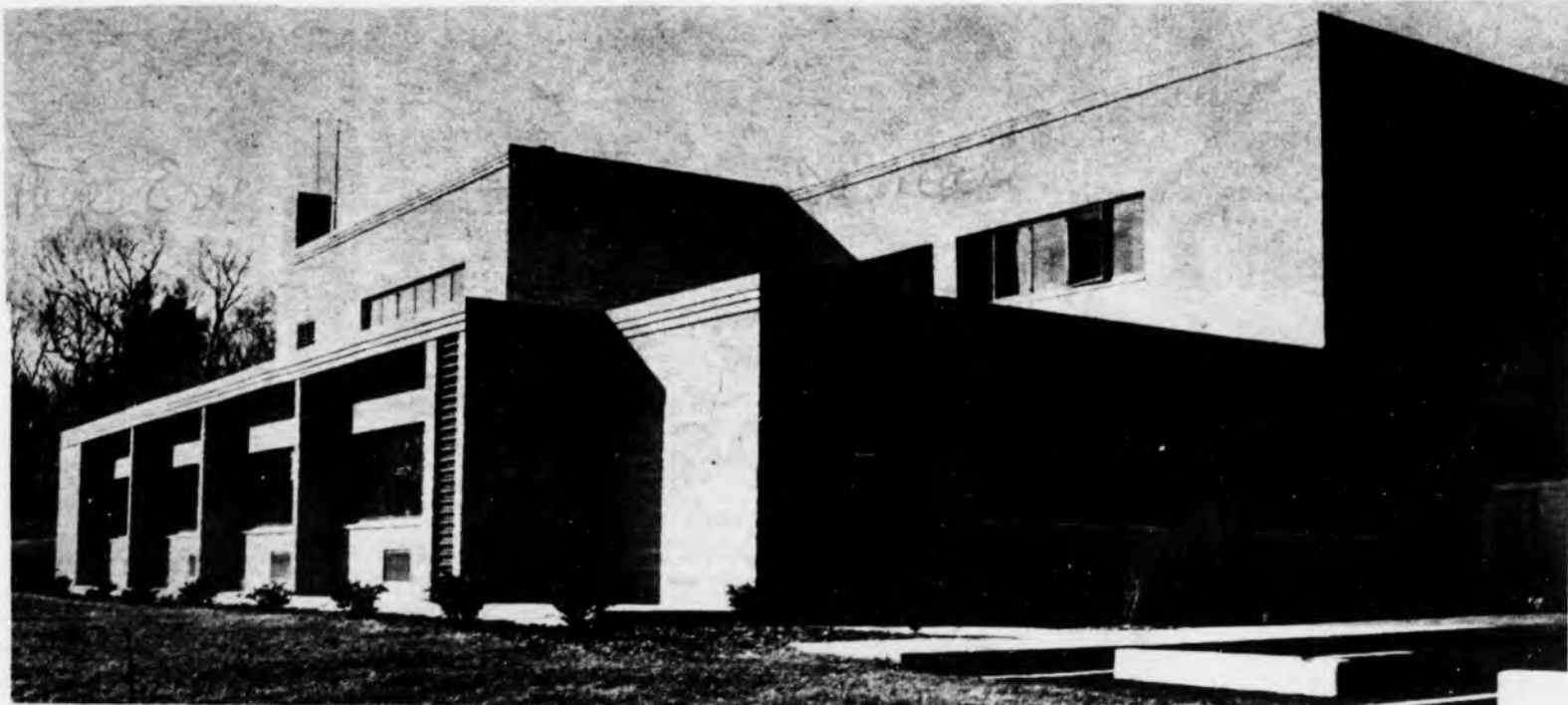
\$13,600, awarded to Paragon Contracting Corp. of Attleboro.

Pratt explained that now is the best time of year for the seven to 10 day scraping and painting project because summer is the period of highest demand. However, he added, the seasonal potential for house fires that might and have occurred, especially the outbreaks on Jerusalem Road, have placed the Water Department "in a precarious position."

About three weeks ago, trial runs were started in draining the two million gallon storage tank for the first time in 14 years. Water pressure lowered, especially in the Hillside area of town, residents complained of discoloration and mains broke on South Main and Margin Streets as a result.

The release of vast amounts of water, which end up draining by way of two fire lines into Lilly Pond, originally caused an excess of pressure in the lower elevations, hence the breaks in the mains. The telemeter, which records the height of the water in the tank, broke down also, so the plant had no way of monitoring water level. In addition to these problems, each of which took days to pacify, the engineers for the treatment plant, SEA Consultants Inc., had to be contacted to provide needed hydraulic information.

There are still some difficulties with pressure and discolor-



The Water Treatment Plant

ation, Pratt said. Discoloration is attributed in part to the current lack of pressure in places throughout the system, but also occurs with the changing of the water flow when the new treatment plant became operation last May.

Discoloration occurs from the accumulation of sediments at the bottom of mains which are byproducts of the water residents are using anyway, Pratt said, and is only aesthetically unpleasant.

"We've had a discoloration problem for years. The old plant was run far beyond its capacity," Pratt explained, but also noted that the Water De-

partment has never had a citation from the state. "The mains in this system have to be rebuilt. They have deteriorated over the years."

The hillside area will probably still experience lower water pressure, Pratt said, even though the plant is being run 24 hours a day to maintain an adequate working pressure at Reservoir Road, Old Pasture Road and Pond Street. Conversely, simulating this pressure may exert too much on the system at sea level.

"We are relying on Scituate to take our expansion on their standpipes," Pratt said and indicated that Hingham would also assist in an overflow emergency.

Apart from the drainage project, residents have been concerned about the water mains which have been removed on the Atlantic Avenue Causeway to facilitate construction causing two "dead-ends" within the system.

"It isn't a good situation," Pratt said, "but it isn't a completely unheard of situation connected with a construction job." He explained that there are hydrants close to both sides of the Causeway which could be connected by a fire hose in an emergency.

So, while the water system in Cohasset is in a temporarily tenuous position, it is still functioning adequately.

The town was not remiss in supplying enough water to the Dec. 18 Jerusalem Road fire. The water problems wouldn't have made any difference in the fire, Pratt said. Just as mutual aid from the surrounding towns assists in the system's overflow so they automatically responded to the fire. "Chief Piepenbrink had as much water as he needed," Pratt said.

"We are in a transition period between the old and new," Pratt said. "People will have some inconveniences until all the problems are solved."

Cohasset has the nucleus of a new water system, the water treatment plant and, before long, the standpipe will be as good as new, too.

Selectmen May Release Feola Minutes

Last week Selectmen indicated they may release the executive session minutes concerning the case of Patrolman Randolph Feola, Jr.

Feola was suspended for five days without pay by his father, Police Chief Randolph Feola, for "poor judgement" in connection with allegations of motor vehicle violations.

Selectmen held at least two executive sessions to discuss the case, once with Chief Feola present. Police reports of the Feola incident were also brought before the Selectmen. All the information may be made public if the minutes are approved by the Selectmen.

There was some confusion

at last week's meeting as to when exactly the executive sessions were held. Apparently the executive session minutes that were available had not been typed for the Selectmen's perusal. Selectmen therefore decided to defer a decision to release the information until this week when they would obtain an opinion from Town Counsel on what they are obligated to release.

Town Counsel Blake Thaxter had not handed down a definitive opinion on the matter as of late last week. Selectmen, however, said they were in favor of releasing whatever communications enter their office.

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